

<b>TITLE:</b>	Domestic, Family & Sexual Violence Policy		
<b>DIVISION:</b>	Corporate Policy		
<b>ADOPTED BY:</b>	Barkly Regional Council		
<b>DATE OF ADOPTION:</b>	22 March 2018	<b>DATE OF REVIEW:</b>	March 2020
<b>MOTION NUMBER:</b>	OC 54/18		
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	CP000056		
<b>AUTHORISED:</b>	Chief Executive Officer		

### THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:

All employees of the Barkly Regional Council and its Elected Members including LA members.

### OBJECTIVES

The aim of this policy is provide a clear statement in relation to Council's attitude and position on the issue of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence in relation to Council staff, elected members and the Barkly Community

Barkly Regional Council is committed to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful workplace and community and will be proactive in addressing this issue

### DEFINITIONS

Domestic, Family and Sexual violence is the repeated use of violence, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour by an individual against a family member(s) or with someone with whom they have, or have had, an intimate relationship (also referred to as intimate partner violence). Violent behaviour includes not only physical assaults but an array of power and control tactics used together with one another including direct or indirect threats, sexual assault, emotional and psychological torment, control of money, property damage, social isolation and behaviour that causes a person to live in fear. It also includes sexist comments and behaviour that is disrespectful and demeaning of women and elder abuse.

Gender equity means the equal distribution of opportunities, of access to resources and of decision making power between women and men, boys and girls in society.

Gender equity goes beyond formal provisions that ensure women and men are accorded equal treatment (such as sex discrimination legislation) and aims to achieve substantive or "on the ground" equality between men and women in everyday life.

### BACKGROUND

Violence against women is a prevalent problem with serious health, social and economic consequences. Women exposed to violence are placed at greater risk of developing a range of health problems including stress, anxiety, depression, pain syndromes, phobias and medical symptoms (WHO 2000)

- In Australia 1 in 3 women have experienced physical violence over the age of 15

- In Australia 1 women per week is murdered at the hands of a current or former partner. The majority of murders in Tennant Creek are related to family violence.
- Indigenous women are 34% more likely than non-indigenous women to be hospitalised as a result of family violence. In Tennant Creek Domestic violence related assaults went from 196 (15/16) to 271 (16/17), an increase of 38.4%
- Council acknowledges that in order to address this issue the focus needs to be on:
  - Primary Prevention: this is preventing violence before it occurs
  - Secondary Prevention: intervening early to prevent recurring violence
  - Tertiary prevention (response): preventing long term harm from violence
- Council acknowledges the underlying causes of violence against women are:
  - Unequal power between men and women
  - Rigid adherence to gender roles
  - Broader cultures of violence

## OUR COMMITMENT

Barkly Regional Council is committed to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful workplace and community

## OUR ROLE

Council recognises that violence against women harms the entire community. As a large employer and through its role in delivering many services in the community, Council engages with many individuals, families and organisations. Council is ideally placed to promote prevention of violence against women and children.

Our aim is to prevent violence before it occurs. Strategies include addressing the underlying causes of violence against women such as gender inequity; beliefs in rigid gender roles and stereotypes; and behaviours that contribute to, or condone, violence such as sexist jokes, victim blaming or underplaying the seriousness of violence against women.

As part of our commitment to preventing violence against women we will annually support awareness raising activities for White Ribbon Day, International Womens Day and the 16 Days of Action. We will support the activities of the NO MORE campaign. We have also included a Family Violence Clause in our Enterprise Agreement and will on a regular basis provide training to elected members and staff on how to identify and discourage sexist and other disrespectful behaviour at work, home and in the wider community.. We will support training in the wider community to raise awareness of the importance of addressing this social issue.

## We support the following principles:

- All women have the right to safe and respectful relationships and to live free from

violence

- All members of the community are responsible for taking action to prevent violence against women and for developing a culture of respect and equity
- All men have an important role to play in preventing violence against women
- All women and men have the right to opportunities for equal participation in public and private life

### **We will:**

- Not tolerate family violence and gender inequity in our workplace or community
- Demonstrate leadership in prevention of violence against women
- Raise employee and community awareness of the causes and consequences of violence against women
- Provide an inclusive and equitable working environment
- Provide information to staff about ways they can prevent violence against women
- Develop an annual action plan to outline the actions we will be taking to address this issue
- Advocate for gender equity in planning, decision making and service delivery across Council and the wider community
- Be the leading advocate in this region for addressing violence against women
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### **EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

This policy is to be reviewed every two (2) years, and may be reviewed at other times at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.